

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Monday, 9th November 2020

at 7.30pm

This meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom video-conferencing software

Present: Councillors Brown, Freeman Gwynn, Hall, Humphries (Chair), Kenyon, Major, Morrison and Nash.

Three members of the public.

Clerk J. Vischer

1. Apologies - None

2. Public Open Forum

- 2.1. Fred Weyler (WotGN) asked if any steps could be taken to reduce the brightness of the new LED bulbs fitted to the streetlights in Verley Close. He had reported the issue to Milton Keynes Council (MKC) but nothing had happened so far. He was advised that it was probably on a works schedule somewhere as it was known that bulb brightness is adjustable. Councillors offered to follow up if he provided the reference numbers.

3. Procedural

3.1. Declarations of Interest by councillors

3.1.1. Cllr Hall regarding item 5: the Patch Allotment Association (President).

3.1.2. Cllr Major regarding item 5, as a Trustee of the Patch Allotment Association.

3.1.3. Cllr Morrison regarding item 6.3.1. (Community Boat Grant)

3.2. **To agree September Meeting Minutes** - Proposed Cllr Major, Seconded Cllr Morrison.
Unanimous

3.3. **Matters arising from these Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda** - None.

3.4. Clerk's retirement and replacement

3.4.1. **Update** - The Clerk had circulated the vacancy, with Job Description, via the MK Clerks' network. A notice of the vacancy for both Newsletter and noticeboards was in the final stages of preparation.

3.4.2. **Job Description** - The previously circulated and informally agreed Job Description was formally approved. Proposed Cllr Morrison, Seconded Cllr Brown. Unanimous.

4. Finance

4.1. Approval of the latest payments schedule & budget trends (see Annex A)

Payments schedule since the last meeting (September) to date -

Website hosting (Sep) £5.99; OWIS subscription (Oct) £117.30; Clerk's salary (07) £302.48; Bin emptying (Sep) £207.49; Open Spaces Society (annual sub) £45.00; Website hosting (Oct) £5.99; Allotments Fence £3,499.50; Clerk's salary (08) £302.68; Bin emptying (Oct) £207.49; Clerk's admin/expenses (Sep-Nov) £22.40; ICO (annual sub) £35.00; NSALG (Allotment Society – annual) £66.00.

Balances and payments were approved unanimously. Proposed Cllr Major, seconded Cllr Hall.

4.2. Reserves Policy - the figures at the end of the policy had been revised and re-circulated - see Annex B. The total general and earmarked reserves to be considered as the baseline reserve were proposed at £18,500. This was approved unanimously - Proposed Cllr Nash, seconded Cllr Morrison. It was further agreed that the table of figures as shown in the policy be added to the annual budget as an appendix.

4.3. Draft Budget consultation

4.3.1. Draft Budget - this had been circulated (see Annex C). This was approved unanimously subject to the following corrections: Draft Precept 2020-21 should read £9,104; newsletter (line 13) should read £2,000. Proposed Cllr Freeman Gwynn, seconded Cllr Nash.

4.3.2. Capital Spend - Inherent in this budget was the question of reviewing the Capital spend as reserves are now close to the point where precept levels would have to be raised to pay for any Capital spend - even for some operational expenditure. To this end it was agreed to issue a Capital Spend Consultation exercise to residents as well. Approved unanimously. Proposed Cllr Hall, seconded Cllr Freeman Gwynn.

4.4. External Audit Return results - yet to be received (further information had been asked for).

5. Allotments

5.1. PAA Report (*previously circulated*) - It was noted that current occupancy (96%), following most renewals, meant that the waiting-list was being addressed.

5.2. Perimeter fence - The last section of the west fence at the allotments (62m) has been completed. An additional 75m of the north fence has also been completed.

5.3. Rental Calculations - it was noted that the OWPC monitoring team had discovered an error in the formula used to calculate the discretionary rental rate since the introduction of the present accounting system five years ago. Councillors agreed to refund the ten tenants affected as this had occurred prior to PAA management. The total costs were estimated to be just over £200.

6. Environment

6.1. Gated Signage - Cllr Hall reported that this project had been put on hold due to the difficulties of agreeing appropriate locations with Highways and various staff changes at MKC. The project had been removed from the budget for the time being. This was accepted.

6.2. Noticeboard refurbishment - Cllr Major reported that the works had been carried out to a good standard. The re-varnishing had to be delayed because of the wet weather.

6.3. Canal & River Trust

6.3.1. Community Boat Grant Request - it was agreed by 5 votes in favour and 4 abstentions that a bid request be made to the Community Foundation to provide a grant that could be passed on to the Boat Trust. The remaining funds in the grant budget would be used as match-funding. [*post-meeting note*: the Clerk had been informed that the Community Foundation had already given the project a grant and re-granting was against their policy]

6.3.2. Canal & River Trust - Cllr Morrison informed the meeting that Winter moorings set-aside signs were going up along the canal allowing barges to moor *in situ* for the season. The signs would remain in place until March.

- 6.4. Passmore consultation on streetlight brightness levels** - Cllr Major reported that although MKC had acknowledged the list of requirements as derived from the consultation they were unwilling to take any action at present. Cllr Hall offered to share contacts at MKC so that Cllr Major could take the matter further. **MM**

6.5. Ward projects

- 6.5.1. Woughton Park** - Cllr Gwynn reported that during the summer discussions had been progressed with SERCO about implementing the MKC Landscape-approved bio-diversity plan for the new village green. A formal quote was received on 22nd September and circulated to councillors. Items 1, 2, 3 and 8 are now recommended for approval to deliver the WP ward allowances 2019/21. Agreed unanimously. Clerk to issue formal instruction. **CLK**

- 6.5.2. Woughton on the Green Nth & Sth** - Cllr Grindley reported that outdoor Christmas Tree decorations had been purchased for the tree by the junction with Turpyn Court opposite the pub and that he and his family would be responsible for erecting them. The Chair offered a 'leaving' donation of £60 to cover the costs of these tree decorations. Councillors were very grateful for the gift.

- 6.6. Environment Log** - *previously circulated* - The Clerk reported that there are currently sixty open issues. Five new issues had been added, and ten completed since the last meeting.

- 6.7. Bin emptying** - The Clerk was asked to verify with the contractor whether the current emptying schedule was still appropriate. **CLK**

- 6.8. Footpath Right of Way** - The Chair relayed that the Rights of Way officer had informed him that the proposed classification could not be given to both cyclists and pedestrians as the path did not meet various cycling specifications. She will be pursuing adoption as a public footpath, so right will be by foot only. A longer term project will be to explore what needs to be done to upgrade the route for cycle use.

6.9. Planning comment

6.9.1. Update on Previous Planning Applications (*for info*)

20/01291/TPO St Marys Church Newport Road, Woughton On The Green Notification of intention to - Cedar (T1) - insert a root barrier membrane within a 1m deep trench to the south of the paving outside the South porch, and to the South-West side of the porch. *Permitted*

20/02055/FUL 19 Verley Close Woughton On The Green, First floor rear extension with projecting balcony supported by posts and fenestration alterations to rear elevation at ground floor level. *Permitted*

20/02102/FUL 3 Castle Rose Woughton Park, New porch. *Permitted*

6.9.2. Planning Applications since the last meeting

20/02658/FUL 4 Turpyn Court Woughton On The Green, Extension to existing garage. Reviewed - no need for further comment.

20/02611/FUL & 20/02612/LBC 5 The Green Woughton On The Green, Conservation and repair works, alterations and extensions to the main dwelling and curtilage building (Resubmission of 20/00824/FUL). it had been agreed to re-submit the same objections.

20/02756/FUL 22 Verley Close Woughton On The Green, Construction of dormer window to side elevation. No comments.



20/02383/FUL 23 Passmore, Replace existing conservatory with single storey rear extension. No comments - however it was unclear as to whether public notice on the street, had been posted. Cllr Morrison offered to ascertain. JM

6.9.3. **Planning Enforcement** - fallen tree from Hotel across the churchyard wall - no update from MKC officers. Planning Enforcement to be pursued. **Planning Group**

7. Communications

7.1. **Correspondence (other than email)** - Local Clerks and Councils Direct Quarterly; NSALG Magazine (Allotments).

7.2. Newsletter

7.2.1. **Update** - Cllr Freeman Gwynn relayed that the December edition was being proof-read. The Comms group had yet to decide whether to delay publication because of lockdown. A Comms team meeting was timetabled for tomorrow. *[post-meeting note: it was decided to go ahead with publication]*

7.2.2. **Calendar 2021** - The estimated costs for 100 copies were approved: £479+VAT. Proposed Cllr Hall, seconded Cllr Morrison, unanimous.

7.3. Policies Review (previously circulated)

7.3.1. Risk Assessment Register - approved with completed new column. Proposed Cllr Nash, seconded Cllr Major, unanimous.

7.3.2. Environment Policy - Approved. Proposed Cllr Nash, seconded Cllr Major, unanimous. It was planned to draft and circulate a complete revision during 2021.

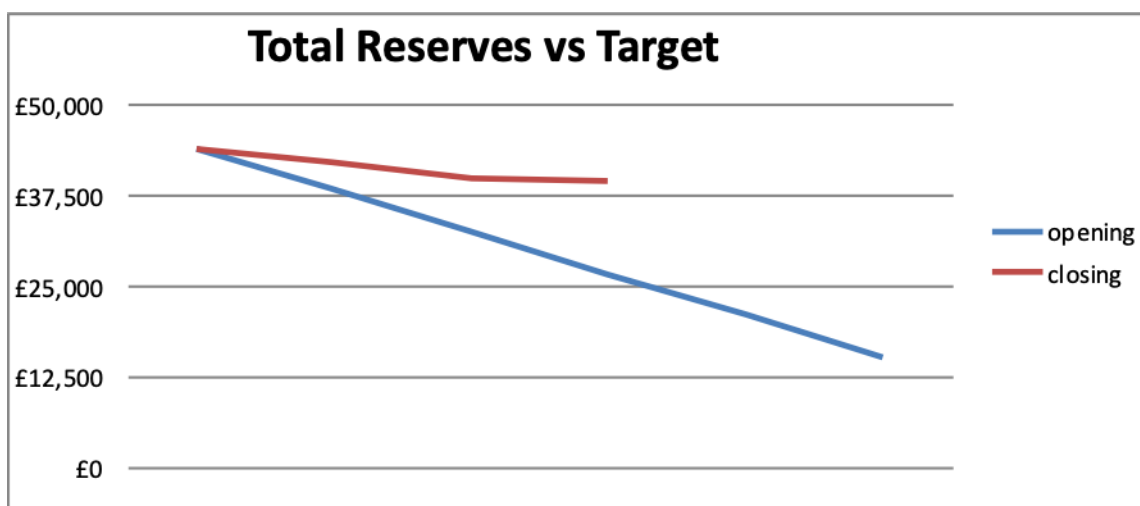
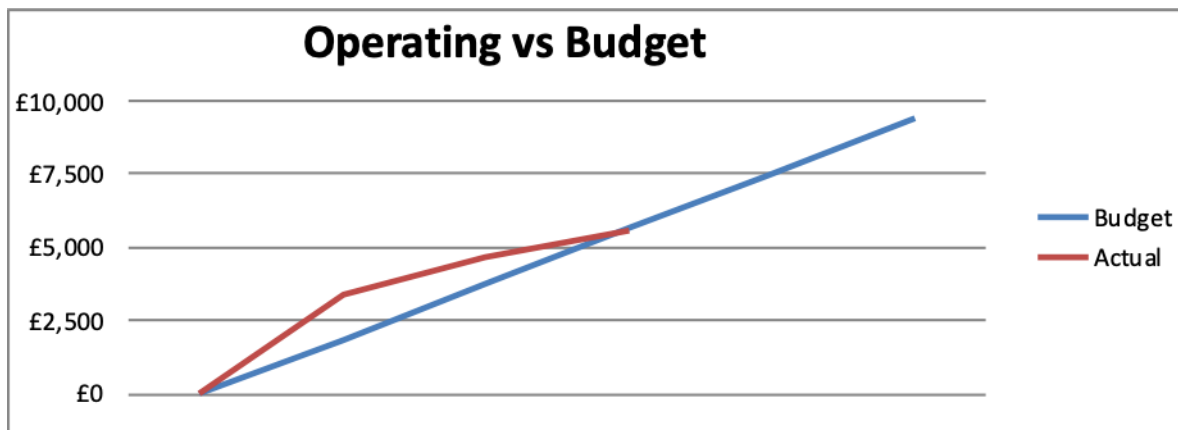
8. **Chair's retirement** - A formal Vote of Thanks was offered to the retiring Chair, Andrew Humphries, in appreciation of all the hard work and enthusiasm he had brought to bear on parish matters. Cllr Humphries had been one of the founding members of OWPC; he was Chair for the majority of his 8 year period in office and had striven to embed the founding principles.
9. **Clerk's Retirement** - Cllr Hall also offered a Vote of Thanks to the retiring Clerk Julian Vischer who would be leaving by the end of the year. He had been in post since November 2013.
10. **Date and Time of next Meeting** – 11th January 2021 at 7.30pm. To be held online.

Meeting ended at 10.05pm

signed

date

ANNEX A - Spending *versus* budget graphs 2020-21



Reserve Balances are represented by:

Current Year Fund	-4,573
Opening Total	44,087
Closing Total	39,514

ANNEX B - Reserves Policy Figures

General Reserves - operational	£9,000	This is held to finance the general day-to-day operations of the Council in case of emergencies that may arise during the year. The level is the approximate equivalent of the current precept.
General Reserves - uncommitted	£2,000	This is for any unexpected expenditure, e.g. repairs of assets - once agreed by Council.
Earmarked Reserves match funding	£0	Not held at present (<i>assuming no gated signage</i>)
Ring-fenced Reserves - Allotments	£2,500	£500 contingency £2000 fund held for unexpected emergency
Ring-fenced Reserves – Election	£5,000	Fund held to finance any called-for election by residents
Total General & Earmarked Reserves	£18,500	

OWPC DRAFT BUDGET	Budget 2020-21	Budget 2021-22	Notes	Codes
Operating Expenditure (£)				
Administration costs	£235	£239	+1.5% inflation default as baseline	4070
Clerk's expenses - home as office(£60); travel (PO Box £100)	£230	£233		4008
PO Box rental	£235	£239		4006
Website hosting	£65	£66		4030
Venue hire	£350	£180	St Mary's reduced rate £30	4072
Venue expenses	£30	£30		4073
BALC/SLCC membership	£185	£188		4074
subscriptions (Open Spaces Society, NSALG)	£100	£60	OSS no longer required	4068
OWIS	£1,500	£1,656	increase from £117 to £138 mid 2020	4035
Audit Fees	£300	£305		4040
Newsletter	£2,000	£2000		4045
Calendar		£0	self funded in future	
Bin clearance	£2,000	£2100	additional empty of one bin	4055
Parish noticeboards (maintenance)	£100	£50	contingency, as carried out in 2020	4260
Insurance	£330	£375	increase in premium	4060
Recognition Scheme award	£250	£0	not required	4067
Accounting software (subscription)	£125	£127		4075
Training - Clerk/Councillors	£75	£76		4065
Data Protection	£35	£36		4009
Clerk (7hr p wk)	£4,830	£4,918	this year's latest rate for JV	4001
Grants	£300	£130	allotments £100 grant and BL wreath	4290
Total Operating Expenditure	£13,275	£13,007		
Capital Expenditure (£)				
Allotments - contingency	£4,000	£0	Reserves earmarked	4245
Parish Noticeboards (capital)		£0		4259
Parish ward projects	£8,000	£8,000		4282
New Dog Bins	£200	£200	contingency	4056
Gated Signage	£0	£0	to be re-visited if required	4280
Total Capital Expenditure	£12,200	£8,200		
Total Expenditure	£25,475	£21,207		
Income (£)				
Precept	£9,104	£9,104		1076
Interest from Savings	£300	£150	reduced rates/reduced fixed term sum	1080
Ward Grant to transfer				
Funding from Reserves	£16,071	£11,953	Inc £2,001 Income vs Op. Exp deficit	
Total Income	£25,475	£21,207		
Opening Reserves (£)	£44,087	£35,000	estimated	
Closing Reserves (£)	£28,016	£23,047		